der them has been detached. The barren and fertile flowers grow on different trees. The panicles of barren flowers are the largest and most branched. They are furnished with short, oblong bractes, and downy pedicels. The calyx has five ovate segments, and the corolla five oblong, sigmoid petals. The stamens are longer than the petals, and project through their interstices. The rudiment of a three-cleft style is found in the centre.—In the fertile flowers, the panicles of which are much smaller, the calyx and petals resemble the last, while the centre is occupied by an oval germ, ending in three circular stigmas. The fruit is a bunch of dry berries or rather drupes of a greenish white, sometimes marked with slight purple veins, and becoming wrinkled when old. They are roundish, a little broadest at the upper end, and compressed; containing one white, hard, furrowed seed.

A tree, supposed to be the same with the Rhus vernix, grows in Japan, and furnishes the celebrated black varnish of that country.

A controversy respecting the identity of the Japanese and American species, was carried on in the forty ninth and fiftieth volumes of the London Philosophical transactions, by Mr. Philip Miller

and Mr. John Ellis. The mass of evidence seems to justify the belief, that notwithstanding the remoteness of their situation, they are one and the same species. The description of the oriental tree, given in Kæmpfer's Amœnitates exoticæ, agrees very closely with that of the American species. [*Note* G.] Like our native Rhus, the Japanese tree possesses a poisonous influence, and frequently causes a severe cutaneous affection in those who approach or gather it. It only remains to shew, that a varnish may be obtained from the American Rhus vernix, to furnish strong presumptive evidence of the identity of the two.

If an incision be made in the bark of our Rhus vernix in the spring or autumn, a quantity of thick viscid fluid immediately exudes, and sometimes with such rapidity as to drop off before it can be collected. This juice has an opaque, whitish appearance, and a strong, penetrating, disagreeable smell. On exposure to the atmosphere, its colour soon changes to a deep black. It is extremely slow in drying, and permanently retains its black colour.

In the month of October, 1814, with the assistance of Dr. Pierson, whose case is afterwards described; I collected several ounces of this juice from a thicket of trees in Brighton. Being col-

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